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**Presentation Transcript**  
**The Day of Visitation**  
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The title of this presentation is *The Day of Visitation*. Jesus talks about it in Luke 19:41. It says:

**Luke 19:41-44** – *And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”*

Jesus said the people of Jerusalem, who were alive in His human lifetime, would suffer a terrible siege in Jerusalem and would be destroyed, because they did not recognize that God had come to them. And because they did not recognize him as the Christ – if the whole city had understood and accepted Christ, they would not have been destroyed, because they would have dealt differently with the Romans in a more peace producing way. If you think about it, Jesus navigated that whole Roman occupation thing in a very calm and peaceful way.

It also could apply to the time before He returns again. The disciples asked Him in Matthew 24 about when He would return, and He said the same thing: Jerusalem is going to be surrounded by armies and, if you happen to be there when that happens, know that God has come to do His work and get out! That’s because God was going to visit – that is, intervene.

So, what is *your* day of visitation? Everybody has at least one. Will it be the return of Christ – when you’re changed or resurrected? Or, is this an all-encompassing term? Let’s look at the answers here, right from the start.

Let’s go to Louw & Nida, *Domain Oriented Lexicon*. If you don’t know about this lexicon, it’s a good time to get to know it. They have excellent definitions. And the words of the Bible are

ordered according to the similarity of meaning. So, here's their definition: "The coming of divine power, either for benefit or judgment. Translated: coming or visitation." "Because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to save you" – that's how they render the scripture we just read. Another example would be: "They will praise God on the day of His coming." That's in 1 Peter 2:12. We'll look at that more later.

So, a day of visitation can be good or it can be bad. Actually, they're all good. They're all driving toward a purpose that God is working, but sometimes they're easy because of positive consequences, and sometimes negative.

So, "coming to deliver, to bless, to enlighten, or to deliver consequences of the negative sort." It's not just condemnation and punishment. It's anytime God intervenes. Today, we might say, "When God shows up..." I've seen that. It's a term used and I've heard it used – "When God shows up."

In the passage we just read, it's telling them that He has shown up in the flesh. And because they didn't receive Him – didn't understand it – they're going to be suffering the consequences of that ignorance. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Don't reject it. Don't miss it. Don't let your own distractions or biases cause you to miss it. There's a great scene in *The Chosen*, where they blended a couple of passages. Jesus is healing people in the street, a crowd has gathered around, and there's a Pharisee there, who tells that Jesus is using trickery to fool the people. And Jesus tells the Pharisee, "You called John demon possessed because he ate strange food and wore strange clothes. I come eating, and drinking, and dancing, and associating with sinners, and you say I'm a false prophet." Then, in the scene, He looked the Pharisee right in the eye, and He said, "It doesn't matter what's put before you, you will reject it." That's where His comment comes in about being destroyed along with the temple. "God came to you and you missed it – or, you didn't miss it, but you rejected it."

It's like that old joke where the guy heard on TV that his neighborhood was being evacuated because of a flood – a storm – but he refused to leave. Instead, he went up on the roof to await God's deliverance. He prayed and asked God to save him. Sure enough, the flood waters started to rise. Not long after, a helicopter came. They let down a sling and told him over a loud speaker to get in the sling so they could pull him up. And he shouted, "I don't need help. God will save me." But the flood continued and covered his roof and he was swept away and died. When he got to the pearly gates, he was angry, and he said to God, "Why didn't you save me?" And God said, "Hey, I warned you on TV and I sent you a helicopter. What more do you want?" So, he missed God's visitation.

Peter also uses this term. Let's see what it can teach us. It's in 1 Peter 2:12.

**1 Peter 2:12** – *Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*

So, what time is he talking about? Well, it's clear that he's *not* talking only about Jerusalem, but all people – the Gentiles – and when God visits them – shows up in their lives. So, there have been a whole lot of Gentiles who never knew God. Would you agree? Think of how many Muslims, how many Buddhists, how many Zoroastrians, how many worshippers of Marduk – all the pagan gods – never knew Christ. Christ had not revealed Himself yet. Except for a few, pretty much all humanity, up until two thousand years ago, would be in that category. And then today, we have no idea, because God's the one that chooses.

So, when would this be? Well, it could be any time, but Peter singles out the *day* of visitation – *the day* of visitation. If the term *Gentiles* represents the people who are not a part of the Israel of God today – that would be the church – then that would be all the people who have never entered into an agreement with God – never knew Him, never made a commitment to living His way.

So, let's look at that. When would that time be? Well, let's go to Revelation 20, and verse 7. It says in verse 7:

**Revelation 20:7** – *And when the thousand years are ended* – so, it's after the millennial reign of Christ, right? What comes next is after that, during which the survivors of Christ's return will live on the earth in the flesh and experience God's way of life. And then, at the end of that, there's going to be another resurrection. Why? Well, what about all the other people who didn't survive? What about all the people who never had a chance to know Christ – the billions who have lived and died in times past, who never knew the true God? So, let's read in verse 11:

**V-11-12** – *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*

Now, all these people, at one time, had lived and died on the earth before Christ's return. And this is God showing up for them – when they awaken and come up as physical beings again in this resurrection. If you are biased, because of things you understood before, it sounds like they come to life again only to be judged – you know, the picture of Jesus sitting on a throne with a long line of people passing before Him, each one judged – you go to heaven, you go to hell. So, hold that picture in your mind for a minute while we look at another scripture. Again, it's in Peter – 1 Peter 4:17.

**1 Peter 4:17** – *For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God* – oh, that's now. He's talking about the present day – the present era – *and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?* We're not going to look at this main point, which is obey the gospel of God or die – commit to God or don't exist. We're looking here at how he

uses the word. Peter uses the word *judgement*, not as a decision or a sentencing, but as a period of time, during which we're judged – like when you go to buy a car. You get to drive it, if you want to – to see, or judge, how well you might like it. He said that *we* are being judged now during our life since God called us. So, we are in a period of judgment, not a sentencing. Judgment begins when we become a member of the household of God. God is watching us. He's visiting us right now. If you think about the concept of sanctification, which is a supernatural process by which God prepares us to live in His family for eternity, God's involved! The day of our visitation is our whole life, if we're committed to Christ. He and Christ are living in us – aware of our actions, our emotions, our thoughts, and they intervene and take action at various times in our lives to steer us the right direction. But these people that come up in this resurrection never had a chance to be a member of God's household.

Now, time out. We've got to take a time out here. Some people think that, since Christ died for our sins, we don't have to do any obeying – the law is not applicable any longer. Well, that's not what Peter believed clearly. Peter said we needed to obey the gospel of God. Well, what's that? Well, that's the good news of Christ's coming, the good news about reconciliation and forgiveness, good news of our choice to respond to Christ by becoming free of our past, free of our sins, and so we can choose to become slaves of Christ. Freedom in Christ means to freedom to follow Christ, not to do whatever we want. So, we're to live as he lived. And how did He live? Well, He obeyed the law of love fully – not in the way that they did in Moses' time, but the full application of it. It's no longer necessary to avoid murdering people, but now it's necessary to avoid murdering them *and* hating them. So, Jesus tells us God's law is the definition of love, which is the essence of God. You can't separate God from the law anymore than you can separate God from love, or love from the law. So, by trying to live like Jesus lived, we're practicing to live in a loving way. Okay, time out's over. I just had to mention that.

So, we have a lifetime to prove to God we won't give up on Him. No human has ever kept the law perfectly. Because of Christ's saving sacrifice to expiate our sins, all we need to do is to keep trying. And His sacrifice covers the sins that we commit in error or out of ignorance. So, our whole life, since called, is a judgment period.

Okay, back to Revelation. All these people who lived and died without being visited by God will be visited in, what's the word here? The *day of visitation*. And that's when they come up in that resurrection. Like ours, their second physical life, after being resurrected back to life again, will include God in their lives. The Book of Life will be opened so they can understand God. The Bible – the teachings about how to follow God – they're going to understand it this time. And a book of their deeds will be recorded. And, if they live their lives determined to follow God, then they will be saved, just like we will. God is way more loving and powerful than most people believe. Isn't that true? God's going to have His way with us. He said that He's not willing that any should perish, and He said that *meaning* that.

So, there's a story in the book of Acts where this Ethiopian was in charge of the queen of Ethiopia's court. And he's reading his Bible in the book of Isaiah, and he can't figure out who Isaiah is talking about – himself or someone else? And the story shows us that an angel inspired Philip to go to him to answer his questions. He tells him that Isaiah was talking about Jesus, whom Philip then introduced to the Ethiopian. So, that was a visitation from God. God had sent a messenger to him. God had stepped into his life in a good way. When has God stepped into your life? Is there a story – the first time He stepped into your life? See, all these people who never knew God will awaken and begin to recognize God as God. There'll be no deception over their minds anymore. The ones who knew you in your former life will recall that, even though they though and acted disrespectfully to you, you did not act the same way back to them. And it will be at that time that God had sent you to them and they will be filled with regret and wonder, because God sent you and they missed it. But when resurrected, they will recall the interactions with you, and they will have their first “come to Jesus” moment right then – there's another term that we use in place of visitation.

So, when these Romans that killed Jesus realize what they had done, for example, they will recall callously throwing dice to see who would get His clothes while He hung suffocating on the stake. And they will know that God came to them and they missed it.

When Richard Dawkins awakens and pinches himself, only to find that God raised him up, he won't need any of us to “come to Jesus.” His own words, once recalled, will do the trick. Oh yes, Richard Dawkins, even after everything he said, after all the people he misled, God will raise him up and he's going to get it! God will visit him. So, like I said, God is way more loving and merciful than we've been led to believe. Once the deception is off people's eyes, they will turn to God. So, think about this: Richard Dawkins awakens, and what's he see around him? He sees a planet that has lived God's way for a thousand years, where all the mountains have been laid low, and the desert blooms like a rose, and there's no war, no sickness. Everybody is satisfied. There's peace. So, what do you think he's going to do – no devil there to deceive him? Well, he's going to drop this whole idea of no God. I just use him because he's famous. I don't have anything against him. I don't think that he's that bad of a person, as far as his personality. I don't think he's twisted or anything. I think he just misunderstands.

So, if you look at the animal kingdom and the human kingdom, moral bodies can suffer incredible pain. Why does God allow that? Well, they were designed that way. And there are earthquakes and floods and fires – all these things happen. People suffer and die. What's the point of it all? What is the goal of all the suffering? Well, here is where we get to the more all-encompassing meaning of the term visitation. Just before Christ's return, Jesus told His disciples that, if He didn't return, the human race would wipe itself off the globe. If you are one of those people, who did not know God, and you could see the buildup – you could see it coming, you could see they were getting ready to unleash the nukes – what would God want you to learn from that? What would be the most important thing to learn from humanly caused total annihilation. Well, wouldn't it be that humans, without God's direct visitation, cannot govern themselves successfully? What would that mean? That would mean that we need God, because without Him,

we, eventually, will end up in annihilation. What is the Bible term for that understanding about God's strength and our weakness? Well, it's called poverty of spirit. God knows best and we do not. We are poor blind beggars. Poor of spirit.

Without God, we always die. And with God, we can live forever. So, when those people come up in that second resurrection, they're going to see the result of God's way of life. They're going to see a planet that's flourished under God's care for a thousand years. And they're going to compare that with their experience in this life. And that's where the learning takes place. The difference is going to be stark and shocking and wonderful. What will they compare that to? Well, there's so much evil that's happened in the world, it's impossible to take it all in, even if we could understand every bit of history. They will remember, however, the evil that *they* saw in their lives and compare it to the life they see after people have known God for a thousand years. And they'll figure it out. They will figure out that they have been visited from the grave to live a life of wonder in a wonderful world at last. That will be by the visitation of God in that resurrection.

But it's even more fundamental than that. When God made the creation, we might call that the first time He came to call. That, too, was a visitation. The whole purpose of that was to have children – children who would eventually be like Him – eternal – children who could live in harmony with Him, children who would learn *how* to live His way. And the earth is the place – the learning center, the training ground – for all that learning. All the trials we suffer? All that's to help us understand how to commit to God.

How would we learn, since we have no way of knowing anything about God, except He reveals it to us? Well, they'd have to learn to listen, wouldn't they? And how would they be able to do that? Well, by comparing life without God to life with God – when He's visiting us, teaching us and training us. That's what it's for. That's the lesson we're to learn – that we can't do it without God. Why is that important? Because we're going to have to live with Him for all eternity in peace. He doesn't want a lot of rebels around. Every intervention of God, from the creation to the new heaven and earth, are visitations from God – something to be learned about God from every that happens to us – *everything* that happens to us. We might say that the entire seven thousand years of human experience is for the purpose of realizing that *we need God!* And that life is a disaster – an annihilation – without His visitation – His involvement.

So, the question for us is – when He visits us – do we recognize it? Or, do we miss it? As Peter pointed out, the time of *our* visitation is *now*.

This is Bill Jacobs for LifeResource Ministries, serving children, families and the Church of God. We are a youth advocacy ministry – strong congregations made up of committed Christians. Children need a strong congregation to grow spiritually. So, remember, as an adult member of a congregation, you're responsible to promote peace, safety and inclusiveness among your group. If you use the gifts God has given you to contribute to these efforts, then you'll be

providing the children with the things they need most from their congregation to grow into a strong relationship with Jesus Christ.